

Engine House No. 1
219 Ferry Street
Easton
Northampton County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5547

HABS
PA
48-ERTD
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Engine House No. 1

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Location: 219 Ferry Street, Easton, Northampton County, PA

USGS Easton Quadrangle, UTM Coordinates: 18.482080.4504420

Significance: Though much altered, the Easton's Engine House No. 1 denotes the development of Easton's civic institutions and their linkage to preexisting private organizations, in this instance, the Phoenix Hose Company.

Description: Engine House No. 1 is a two-story brick building which occupies a site 22'2" by 59'2" facing on Ferry Street. Though altered at the end of the nineteenth century when the building was converted to a commercial use, and again in the twentieth century when it was absorbed into the George Hellick Company, the main characteristics of the facade can be reconstructed. Early photographs show a quadripartite lower facade with five stone piers framing a broad central engine door flanked by windows with four-over-four sash and on the right a smaller door opening into the stair hall which led to the second floor hall. The upper level of the facade is of Flemish bond with a simple brick cornice. A marble plaque with the founding date of the Phoenix Hose Company is centered above the first floor; three segmental headed windows lighted the upper room. The two outer windows have been reduced in height and their sash has been replaced, while the shorter central window has been bricked closed. Presumably these changes occurred after an early twentieth century fire, noted in the Sanborn's Maps of the City of Easton, that also damaged 217 Ferry Street (HABS No. PA-5546). The side elevation is presently lighted with small windows on the first floor and large windows above that were presumably added when the adjacent building along the party wall was demolished. According to histories, the building interior was "handsomely frescoed and painted."

Judging from the physical evidence of the fabric, in the late nineteenth century, the lower facade was altered and linked to the adjacent 217. At a later date, the upper level of the building was subdivided into small rooms, necessitating the altered fenestration of the main front. These changes probably occurred in the early twentieth century when the building was absorbed into the George Hellick Coffee Company. Little of historic significance survives in the interior.

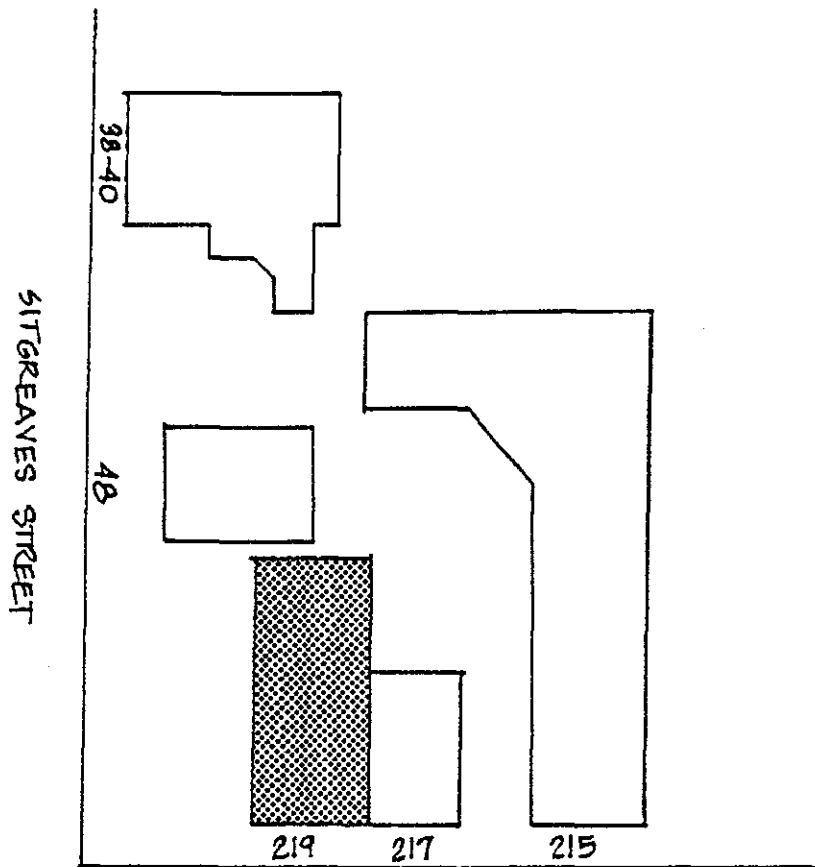
History: The Engine House No. 1 was erected in 1858 from funds provided by the then borough of Easton, for the Phoenix Hose Company which was founded in 1824. The property to the corner of Sitgreaves Street was acquired in 1857 by the borough. The engine house's dedication was marked by a grand ball at the Masonic Hall, October 26, 1859. The rear house (48 Sitgreaves Street, HABS No. PA-5582) was used as the engine driver's house. To help defray their costs, the fire horses were used in a carting business and for sprinkling the streets, providing income until the

city established public fire companies in 1879. In 1870, this was also was the incentive for the fire company to purchase the adjacent property at the corner of Sitgreaves and Ferry Streets on which, in 1876, they constructed a private residence for rental income.

In the twentieth century the building was acquired by the George Hellick Coffee Company and was adapted to industrial purposes. The Easton Historic District was formed in 1983; the properties were acquired by the United States Postal Service for an addition to the existing postal building.

Sources: Rev. Uzal Condit, The History of Easton, PA, 1738-1885, Easton, 1885, pp. 347-8. Illus.; Northampton County Deeds, vol. E-9, p. 350; D. G. Beers, Pomeroy's Atlas of Northampton County, Philadelphia, 1874, pl. 35; Sanborn's Atlas of the City of Easton, Sec. 11, 1919; Sec. 4, 1927. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, comprehensive Historic Sites Survey form. Barbara Ripley, 1978. (Contains historical view).

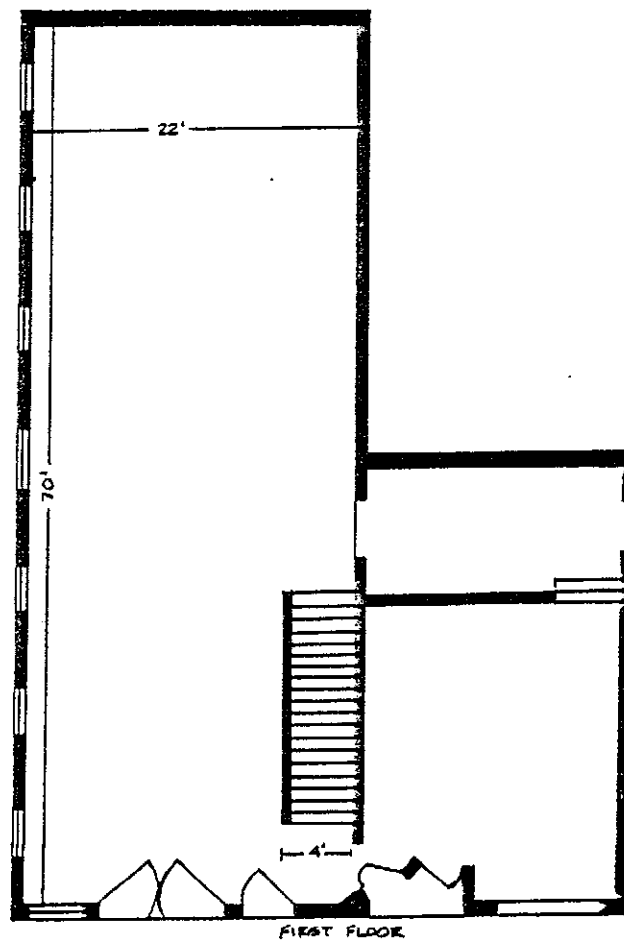
Historian: George E. Thomas, Ph.D., Emily T. C. Jernigan, Clio Group, Inc. October 11, 1990.



FERRY STREET

EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA

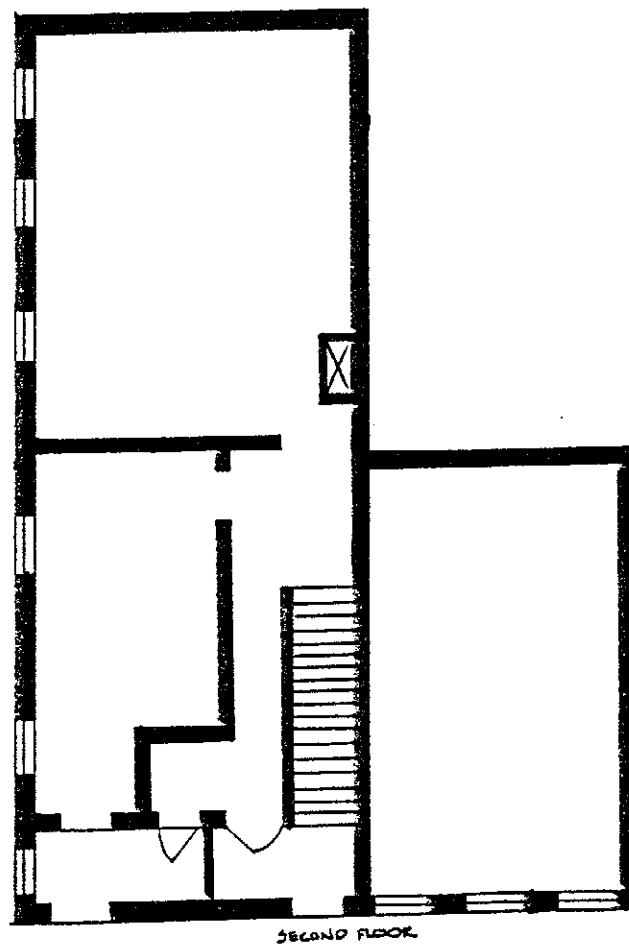




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